

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON THE PUBLIC VETERINARY
SERVICES.

R E P O R T

OF THE

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE

APPOINTED BY THE

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

TO INQUIRE INTO THE

**REQUIREMENTS OF THE PUBLIC SERVICES WITH
REGARD TO OFFICERS POSSESSING
VETERINARY QUALIFICATIONS.**

Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty.



LONDON :

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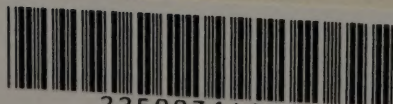
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CONTENTS.

	Page
MINUTES APPOINTING THE COMMITTEE - - - - -	3
REPORT - - - - -	4
INTRODUCTORY - - - - -	4
REQUIREMENTS OF THE PUBLIC SERVICES AND HOW THEY ARE MET AT PRESENT - - -	5
ARMY VETERINARY SERVICE - - - - -	5
INDIAN CIVIL VETERINARY DEPARTMENT - - - - -	5
COLONIAL VETERINARY SERVICES - - - - -	6
BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES - - - - -	7
LOCAL VETERINARY OFFICERS - - - - -	8
VETERINARY COLLEGES - - - - -	9
GENERAL - - - - -	9
COURSE OF STUDY BEFORE QUALIFICATION - - - - -	10
COURSE OF STUDY AFTER QUALIFICATION - - - - -	12
NOTIFICATION OF VACANCIES - - - - -	13
OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS - - - - -	14
SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS - - - - -	14

NOTE.—The Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee, together with Appendices and Index, will be published in a separate volume.

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MINUTES APPOINTING THE COMMITTEE.

I.

I hereby appoint a Committee to inquire into the requirements of the public services with regard to the employment of officers possessing veterinary qualifications and to consider whether any further measures can with advantage be adopted for the selection and training of students with a view to such employment.

The Committee will be constituted as follows :—

SIR ALFRED HOPKINSON, K.C. (*Chairman*);

SIR THOMAS H. ELLIOTT, K.C.B.;

SIR THOMAS W. HOLDERNESS, K.C.S.I.;

MR. H. J. READ, C.M.G.;

MAJOR G. F. MACMUNN, D.S.O.

And I hereby appoint Sir Alfred Hopkinson to be Chairman of the Committee, and Mr. H. L. French, of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, to be its Secretary.

(Signed) WALTER RUNCIMAN,
President of the Board of Agriculture
and Fisheries.

30th August 1912.

II.

I hereby appoint Mr. Francis C. Drake to be a member of the Departmental Committee on the Public Veterinary Services appointed by my Minute of the 30th August 1912, *vice* Sir T. W. Holderness, K.C.S.I., resigned.

(Signed) WALTER RUNCIMAN,
President of the Board of Agriculture
and Fisheries.

25th October 1912.

REPORT.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES.

SIR,

THE Committee appointed by your Minute of the 30th August 1912, to inquire into the requirements of the public services with regard to the employment of officers possessing veterinary qualifications, beg to submit the following report :—

INTRODUCTORY.

1. At an early stage of our inquiry Sir Thomas W. Holderness, K.C.S.I., who had become Permanent Under-Secretary of State for India since the date of the Minute above referred to, found it necessary to resign his appointment as a Member of the Committee, and you accepted his resignation and appointed, in his place, Mr. Francis C. Drake, who had succeeded him as Secretary of the Revenue and Statistics Department of the India Office.

2. We have sat on six days for the purpose of hearing evidence and have examined 21 witnesses. Out of this number five, of whom three were members of the veterinary profession, gave evidence on behalf of the four Government Departments represented on the Committee, viz., the Colonial Office, India Office, War Office, and the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries; six of the witnesses held appointments in the five institutions engaged in the provision of veterinary education in the United Kingdom; one witness attended as the representative of the examining and diploma-granting body, the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons; three witnesses were members of the profession not connected either with the teaching institutions or with the Government services; five witnesses were professors in British Universities; and the veterinary inspector of the Commonwealth of Australia in London also gave evidence. The 21 witnesses included 14 members of the veterinary profession.

In addition to verbal evidence, we received a number of written statements some of which we think it would be useful to publish. They will be found in the appendix to the Minutes of Evidence. A letter was addressed to the Universities in the United Kingdom inquiring whether they desired to appoint representatives to attend before us; seven Universities decided to nominate representatives, and of these one was unfortunately unable to attend owing to ill-health, another sent a written statement in lieu of verbal evidence and representatives of the other five gave evidence before us. The Colonial Office, on our behalf, sent a letter to each of the Self-Governing Dominions inquiring if there were in this country any officers who could give us information as to the requirements of those countries in regard to veterinary services. Verbal evidence, as stated above, was received from a representative of Australia, and written statements were received regarding Canada, South Africa, and New Zealand. We regret that Dr. Arnold Theiler, C.M.G., the distinguished Director of Veterinary Research in the Union of South Africa, was unable to appear before us, and we desire to express to him our indebtedness for the valuable memorandum which he sent on the subject of our inquiry.

3. In order that the rest of this report may be generally understood, it may be desirable to state that the indispensable license to practise as a veterinary surgeon within the United Kingdom is the Diploma of Membership of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. The Royal College is not a teaching institution, but it recognises the following institutions for the purpose of training students to sit for its examinations :—

Royal Veterinary College, Camden Town, London, N.W.

Royal (Dick) Veterinary College, Edinburgh.

Royal Veterinary College of Ireland, Dublin.

Veterinary College, Glasgow.

Veterinary School of the University of Liverpool.

The Diploma of Membership is awarded only after attendance for four years at one of the above-named institutions, and success at the examinations conducted by the Royal College.

The primary object of each of the teaching institutions is the preparation of students for the profession. In addition, courses for those who have qualified, lasting for about two months are provided at the Royal Veterinary College in London, and a

course for the Diploma in Veterinary Hygiene is held at the University School at Liverpool. In London and in Edinburgh some students prolong their studies by a year in order to obtain a B.Sc. Degree in Veterinary Science. A course in Veterinary State Medicine lasting for six months and open only to those who have already obtained the diploma of the Royal College is provided in the University of Manchester, and a University diploma in Veterinary State Medicine is awarded after examination. Qualified veterinary surgeons also from time to time study in pathological and other laboratories in order to extend their knowledge of any branch of veterinary science in which they are specialising. It should also be stated that the Royal Veterinary College, Camden Town, has been selected as one of the research institutions for animal pathology under a scheme for the promotion of agricultural research for the purposes of which the Treasury have recently sanctioned a block grant from the Development Fund to the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries; the other institution for this purpose being the veterinary laboratory of the Board itself.

THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE PUBLIC SERVICES AND HOW THEY ARE MET AT PRESENT.

4. *Army Veterinary Service.*—We deal with the Army Veterinary Service first, as more veterinary surgeons are employed in this branch of the public service than in any other, and also because there appear to be no difficulties in obtaining suitable recruits. The total number of officers in the Army Veterinary Service is about 170; candidates for these appointments are nominated, after an interview, to sit for a competitive examination conducted by members of the Service, and, according to the number of existing vacancies, those who obtain the best places as a result of the examination are appointed. Major-General R. Pringle, C.B., D.S.O., the Director-General of the Army Veterinary Services, informed the Committee that during the last 10 years no difficulty had been experienced in finding a sufficient number of suitable candidates for the examination, and that the type of man who joined the Service was thoroughly satisfactory (Q. 372-4, 386-8). This evidence was explained and supplemented by the heads of the teaching institutions, who, almost without exception, stated that most of their best students who aim at obtaining Government appointments try first for the Army.

We are, therefore, satisfied that the requirements of the Army Service are adequately met at the present time, and that it is unnecessary for us to make any recommendations on the subject. There are, however, from the point of view of this inquiry, two important respects in which the Army Service differs from the other branches of the public veterinary services. In the first place, the duties of officers in this Service are almost entirely confined to work in connection with one class of animal, viz., horses and mules; and, secondly, and this is an important consideration, the first two years of the young officer's service, during which period he receives full pay, are devoted to the improvement of his education and to training him for his future work (Q. 394-5).

Although, as already stated, we think it unnecessary to make any recommendations with regard to the Army Veterinary Service, it must not be overlooked that the measures which we suggest later with regard to the other branches of the Government Veterinary Services will, if adopted, also affect this Service; in other words, the existence of these 170 Army appointments must not be lost sight of when considering the requirements of the other Services, for it is certain that many of the best students turned out by the Veterinary Colleges will continue to seek appointments as Army Veterinary Surgeons.

5. *Indian Civil Veterinary Department.*—Detailed information with regard to the number of officers in the Indian Civil Veterinary Department, their salaries and the qualifications required, is given in a memorandum furnished to the Committee by the India Office and printed in the Appendix to the Minutes of Evidence. The present position may be summarised as follows:—The Officers of the Department perform or supervise all official veterinary work in India, other than that of the Army. Their principal duties are concerned with (a) educational work in veterinary colleges; (b) horse and mule breeding; and (c) cattle disease and cattle breeding. In addition, there is a veterinary research station for which officers are specially selected. The number of veterinary posts in the Department, other than those of a subordinate character held by natives, is at present 32, and as vacancies occur appointments are made by the Secretary of State. The usual method employed for obtaining candidates for these appointments is, when a vacancy occurs, to ask the heads of the Veterinary

Colleges in the United Kingdom for information regarding likely candidates, and to keep in touch, through a representative of the India Office, with the Veterinary Colleges. The number of vacancies that occur, however, is very small, the total number in the last five years, 1908-12, being only six. Candidates must have a thorough knowledge of their profession as general practitioners, and preference is given to those who have made bacteriology a special study; any candidate who has not attended one of the courses provided for men who have already qualified, is required, if selected, to attend such a course at his own expense before he is appointed. The candidates selected have not in any case been found unwilling to comply with this requirement. After appointment, officers are encouraged to acquire additional scientific training and knowledge, and facilities are given under the Study Leave rules for this purpose. Many veterinary officers have taken advantage of these facilities, and in recent years two officers were placed on deputation for two years each in order that they might have the opportunity of advanced study in laboratories in this country and on the Continent and in America.

Owing to the small number of appointments that have had to be made in recent years no very great difficulty has been experienced in securing properly qualified men for the vacancies that have occurred, but Lieutenant-Colonel Queripel, late Inspector-General of the Department, who advises the India Office in regard to the selection of veterinary officers, stated in a memorandum* which he sent to the Committee, that, in comparison with 10 years ago, there was at the present time a great difficulty in obtaining suitable candidates, and that if a larger number had been required it might have been impossible to secure men with the necessary qualifications.

6. *Colonial Veterinary Services.*—Under this head are included two distinct classes of appointments:—(a) in the Crown Colonies and Protectorates, and (b) in the self-governing Dominions. The requirements of each need to be considered separately.

Veterinary appointments in the Crown Colonies and Protectorates, of which there are about 40 at present, are filled by the Colonial Office. A list of such appointments, showing the salary attached to each, is given in the Appendix to the Minutes of Evidence. These appointments do not form one service, like the Army or Indian veterinary services. An officer is appointed to a post in a colony and he has no claim to promotion to superior posts outside the colony to which he has been appointed. The Colonial Office, in filling one of the more highly paid posts in one colony, would, however, in practice, consider the qualifications and experience of officers serving in other colonies at lower salaries. With a view to the improvement of their veterinary departments the Secretary of State, in February 1907, addressed a circular despatch to each of the Crown Colonies and Protectorates, outlining a scheme for the recruitment of the services. This scheme received general approval, and since that date the method adopted for recruiting this service has been as follows:—The Colonial Office keeps a list of the names of the most promising men who have applied for appointments, and particulars of vacancies, as they occur, are sent to the men on this list. Before his name is added to the list, an applicant is interviewed by a representative of the Colonial Office and also by the Chief Veterinary Officer of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, who has had colonial experience. Preference is given to candidates who have taken a post-graduate course, and, before appointment, candidates are required, when time permits, to pass a qualifying examination held twice yearly by the Civil Service Commissioners. This examination, which is partly professional and partly administrative, is the same as that for veterinary appointments in the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.

In recent years there has been great difficulty in securing men of the standard required to fill these appointments. Mr. Batterbee, who gave evidence before us on behalf of the Colonial Office, stated that at times a long interval, amounting in some cases to a year, has elapsed between the occurrence of a vacancy and the selection of a suitable man to fill it (Q. 450). Such delays obviously cause serious inconvenience and loss in the colony, where, perhaps, only one veterinary officer is employed, and must tend to the appointment of men possessing lower qualifications than are desired. The work to be undertaken in some of the Crown Colonies and Protectorates is of an exceptionally difficult character; diseases, unknown in this country, have to be studied, and, if possible, suppressed; and precautions have to be taken, so far as possible, to prevent the introduction of other diseases non-existent in the colony. Such work as this, especially when, as is often the case, it has to be undertaken alone

* Minutes of Evidence, Appendix II, 1.

[Cd. 6575.]

REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON THE
PUBLIC VETERINARY SERVICES.

It is requested that the accompanying leaf, pages 7 and 8, be substituted for that in the Report recently issued.

H.M. Stationery Office,
March 1913.

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without any professional advice or assistance available, requires men of initiative and sound scientific training, and the Colonial Office has experienced great difficulty in securing such men.

7. The veterinary appointments in the self-governing Dominions are, of course, made by the Dominion Governments themselves. Many of the posts have been filled by the appointment of students trained in the veterinary colleges of the United Kingdom and, although in some cases local veterinary teaching institutions have been established, it is probable that a larger number of such appointments would be made if suitable men were available. The requirements of the Dominions differ considerably. Reference to the instructive memorandum received from Dr. Theiler, Director of Veterinary Research in South Africa, which is printed in the Appendix to the Minutes of Evidence, will show what a large and highly organised veterinary service exists in the Union of South Africa. Men possessed of high scientific training, in addition to their veterinary qualifications, are required for research work at the admirably equipped Government veterinary laboratory near Pretoria. In addition, well-qualified veterinary officers are required for executive and advisory work. The supply of men available in this country for both classes of work is inadequate, and throughout Dr. Theiler's memorandum it will be seen that the greatest difficulty is found in securing good men.

From the latest report issued by the Canadian Department of Agriculture, it appears that the chief officer of the Health of Animals and Live Stock Branches of the Department is the Veterinary Director-General and Live Stock Commissioner, under whom are employed large veterinary and non-professional staffs. The veterinary staff may be grouped as follows:—Three chief inspectors (one for meat inspection), four officers in charge of different provinces, three superintendents of animals' quarantine stations, five veterinary pathologists, and about 130 veterinary inspectors. In addition there are, under the provisions of the Meat and Canned Foods Act, about 80 veterinary inspectors stationed at abattoirs and other establishments under inspection. The majority of the veterinary officers employed in the Department have received their education in Canada. The principal veterinary work undertaken is in connection with (a) the quarantine of animals, especially the precaution against the introduction of disease by the importation of animals entering the country both by boat from Europe and elsewhere and by rail across the international border; (b) the control of diseases already existing in Canada; and (c) meat inspection. Connected with the Health of Animals Branch is a biological laboratory for the conduct of investigations into the nature and causes of animal diseases.

In Australia and New Zealand the principal work required from the public veterinary service is in connection with meat inspection and the quarantine of live stock on importation. For this work in New Zealand the supply of well-trained veterinary surgeons is insufficient, largely, no doubt, because there is not adequate provision in the United Kingdom for them to obtain special instruction in meat inspection.

8. *Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.*—The Veterinary Department of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries consists at present of 36 veterinary officers and 106 local veterinary inspectors. The local inspectors are private practitioners to whom an annual retaining fee is paid in addition to a fee in connection with each outbreak or reported outbreak of disease visited on behalf of the Board; their duties closely resemble those of veterinary inspectors employed by local authorities and these two classes of officers are dealt with together in a later paragraph. The work of the Veterinary Department of the Board formerly consisted almost entirely of diagnosing and reporting upon the various diseases of animals which are the subject of legislation in Great Britain, but in recent years a considerable amount of attention has been given to research and experimental investigations. Mr. (now, Sir) Stewart Stockman, the Chief Veterinary Officer of the Board, pointed out, in his evidence before us, the necessity of research being undertaken into the nature of a disease before the adoption of administrative methods with a view to its suppression or control. He said that it had often occurred that after administrative methods had been applied with a view to control a disease about which it was thought that everything was known, problems had arisen as to its pathology and epizootiology which demanded investigation (Q. 1003, 1015). The necessity for making provision for the conduct of research in animal pathology in the veterinary laboratory of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries has recently been recognised by the Development Commissioners and the Treasury, who have agreed to the payment of a considerable annual grant from the Development Fund for the purpose.

Sir Stewart Stockman showed that for the requirements of the Board two types of officers are needed—first, veterinary surgeons specially trained in epizootiology are required for the important work of diagnosing infectious diseases and devising preventive measures, and, secondly, men similarly trained with an additional training and aptitude for research work are required for advanced investigation and research. The method adopted for the recruitment of the Veterinary Department is as follows:—applicants for posts are interviewed and the names of the most promising ones are noted; when a vacancy occurs the most suitable men are informed and the best candidate available is appointed. On appointment he is given special training in the Board's laboratory for about a month, and is then sent to serve under an experienced officer for about the same length of time. After a probationary period of two years, officers are required to sit for written and practical examinations in advanced pathology and epizootiology, the retention of their services by the Board being conditional on the examinations being passed. Special facilities are given to officers to attend courses of study at Veterinary Colleges. The Chief Veterinary Officer keeps in touch with the heads of the Veterinary Colleges and endeavours to secure for the Department the services of promising students after they have qualified, but he informed the Committee that the supply at present available of both the types of men required is inadequate, and that the Board are obliged occasionally to appoint officers who do not possess all the qualifications that the work demands (Q. 992-3). The veterinary staff of the Board has increased considerably in recent years, and still further increase will no doubt be required; in addition to the staff employed in administrative work the staff engaged in research will need to be supplemented to enable the veterinary laboratory to undertake the duties assigned to it under the scheme for the promotion of agricultural research which has been previously referred to, but it appears to be exceedingly difficult at the present time to find a sufficient number of men who have received the training necessary to fit them to undertake research in animal pathology.

9. *Local Veterinary Officers.*—Under this head are grouped three classes of officers. The first two classes of appointments are filled, as a rule, by veterinary surgeons engaged in private practice in the locality. First, there are the local veterinary inspectors of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, referred to above, who are employed, as required, in connection with outbreaks of swine-fever, and, occasionally, of other diseases.

The second class consists of the veterinary inspectors appointed by local authorities under the Diseases of Animals Act, 1894, which provides that “every local authority shall keep appointed at all times at least one veterinary inspector, and shall appoint and at all times keep appointed so many other veterinary inspectors as the Board of Agriculture, having regard to the extent and circumstances of the district of the local authority, direct.” The number of local authorities in Great Britain under the Diseases of Animals Acts at the present time is 329. The Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries to inquire into the circumstances of the recent outbreaks of Foot-and-Mouth Disease* considered the question of the qualifications which should be possessed by veterinary inspectors of local authorities, and expressed the opinion that, “in view of the progress of veterinary science in its application to the control and eradication of contagious diseases, the subjects grouped under epizootiology can now only be adequately taught in post-graduate courses of a practical kind.” The Committee stated that in expressing this view they had “no desire to minimise the valuable services which the veterinary profession have rendered in the suppression of contagious diseases of animals, and in this connection they recognise to the full the fact that the remuneration offered to veterinary inspectors by local authorities is insufficient to attract the services of specially qualified men. The Committee therefore strongly recommend that the appointment of all veterinary inspectors of local authorities should be in accordance with uniform rules relating to qualifications to be laid down by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.” We concur in the opinion that inspectors employed in connection with the Diseases of Animals Acts should be required after they have qualified to attend such practical courses as above suggested.

The third class included under this head comprises a comparatively small number of officers possessing veterinary qualifications, employed by local authorities under the Public Health Acts. Witnesses of experience expressed the opinion that the number of veterinary officers employed by sanitary authorities in Great Britain should be greatly increased, and that it was extremely desirable that meat inspection and

* [Cd. 6222], 1912. Messrs. Wyman & Sons, Ltd., Fetter Lane, London, E.C. Price 1½d.

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similar work should be undertaken by men possessed of veterinary qualifications (Q.1387-93, 1573). We agree with this opinion and with the view expressed by many professional witnesses that in order to fit a veterinary surgeon to undertake such work he should, after qualifying, gain practical experience of the work under the direction of a veterinary officer (Q. 1180-4, 1394-7, 1509-11, 1681-90).

10. *Veterinary Colleges*.—The staff of the veterinary teaching institutions does not strictly come within the scope of our inquiry, but the type of man required for these posts is, to some extent, the same as that required for the public services, and their existence is, therefore, of importance from our point of view.

We have received evidence that considerable difficulty is experienced in filling vacancies which occur on the staff of the Colleges and the supply of suitable men is so small that the Principal of the Royal Veterinary College of Dublin stated that he had in the past been obliged to select one of his best students and train him specially in order to fill such a vacancy (Q. 339-342). This shortage of highly qualified teachers of veterinary science is a serious matter for the public services. In this connection it is necessary to refer again to the scheme recently approved by the Development Commissioners for the promotion of agricultural research. A part of this scheme provides for the award each year of twelve research scholarships, each of the annual value of 150*l.*, and available for a period of three years. One of the subjects for which these research scholarships are offered is animal pathology, and we understand that in each of the two years during which the scholarships have been available there have been fewer applicants for scholarships in this subject than in any other of the ten subjects into which agricultural science has been divided.

11. *General*.—The demand for the public services of highly trained veterinary officers, both for administrative and research work, will almost certainly increase, and it is therefore necessary in considering the requirements of the public veterinary services not to have regard merely to the number of existing appointments. The Departmental Committee whose report is referred to above (paragraph 9) recommended that every local authority or group of local authorities under the Diseases of Animals Acts should have at their disposal the services of a chief veterinary officer with special qualifications in veterinary science and practice, who should not be engaged in private practice. A staff of specially qualified veterinary surgeons will also be required for the purposes of an official testing station which the Government has decided to establish in connection with the export of live stock. It is probable that in the near future the State will endeavour to control some diseases which are not at present scheduled, and for this work a larger number of veterinary officers will be required for administrative work. In the colonies also, increased attention is being given to those epidemics of tropical disease which have proved so destructive of animal life. The duties undertaken by the Veterinary Department in India may also be expected to expand.

12. From the foregoing paragraphs it will be seen that there is at present an inadequate supply of suitable candidates for civil veterinary appointments at home, in the colonies, and in India. This shortage may be accounted for partly by the reduction in the total number of students who have attended the colleges in recent years. During the past 10 years the demand for veterinary practitioners in urban districts has been reduced owing to the substitution of mechanical for animal transport. The average number of men entering the profession in the last five years, viz., 1907-11, was only 85, compared with an average of 140 during the five years 1892-96.* A large number of veterinary students attend college with the fixed object of eventually engaging in private practice; of the remainder, a small percentage only possess the special qualifications desirable in officers of the public services. The total number of students has during the last 15 years been reduced, as shown above, by 40 per cent., but no steps have been taken during this period to train a larger number of candidates eligible and suitable for public employment. The problem, therefore, which this Committee has had to attempt to solve may be stated as follows:—How can the number of young veterinary surgeons fitted for, and desirous of, appointments in the Government Services best be increased without causing an undue increase in the number of veterinary practitioners? We have been informed on

* Minutes of Evidence, Appendix I. 5.

good authority that the number of persons entering the profession at the present time is probably sufficient to meet the requirements of the country when regard is had to the existing register (*Q.* 520-523); and it has been necessary for us, therefore, in considering the requirements of the public services to be careful not to recommend any steps which would cause an undue increase in the size of the profession.

Mr. Share-Jones, the Secretary of the Veterinary Board of the University of Liverpool, urged on the Committee the desirability of increasing the number of institutions providing veterinary education in the United Kingdom, as he was of opinion that a large number of potential students are deterred from entering the profession by reason of the distance at which the existing colleges are situated from their homes, and the cost of maintenance consequent on residence away from home for four years. He further stated that, in his opinion, the proposed additional institutions could with the greatest efficiency and economy be established as part of one or two of the modern universities, on lines similar to those of the Department at Liverpool (*Q.* 1292-1300). All the other witnesses who referred to the subject stated that the number of colleges was, in their opinion, sufficient and deprecated any increase, and some expressed a decided opinion that the number of existing colleges should be reduced in view of the limited requirements of the country.

13. We have been impressed by the fact that, hitherto, no specific provision has been made for the education of veterinary officers who are to be employed in research and administrative work at home and abroad beyond that required for the ordinary veterinary practitioner. At the present time the course of study pursued by all students is practically the same until they qualify; with rare exceptions no students continue their general education beyond the secondary school stage; they then proceed at the age of 17 or 18 to one of the veterinary colleges and pursue for at least four years the specific course of study required to enable them to qualify as veterinary surgeons. In some of the colleges short courses of study are provided for men who have qualified. The course for the diploma of membership of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons has been designed primarily for the education of private practitioners, and the further training necessary to fit men for Government employment has been obtained, if at all, at the end of the four years' veterinary course. The above remarks are not intended as a criticism of veterinary education generally. The standard of the qualifying examinations has from time to time been raised and the length of the course of study increased, and the evidence which we received goes to show that in order to qualify as a veterinary surgeon a student has to attain a knowledge of veterinary science which is quite sufficient for the purposes of private practice.

14. Many witnesses suggested that in order to increase the number of well qualified candidates for veterinary posts in the Government service the scales of salary authorised for these posts should be raised. We fully recognise the importance of offering adequate salaries and prospects of advancement in order to secure suitable men, but we believe that this alone is not sufficient. The most important steps which in our opinion must be taken in order to improve both in quality and quantity the candidates for Government veterinary appointments are (1) to encourage a larger number of young men who have continued their general and scientific education beyond secondary school age to enter the veterinary profession; (2) to provide for men who have qualified as veterinary surgeons increased facilities to extend their knowledge, more especially in the direction of specialisation in one branch of veterinary science; and (3) to improve the system of notifying vacancies. Each of these proposals needs to be discussed separately.

COURSE OF STUDY BEFORE QUALIFICATION.

15. The first year's course at a veterinary college is devoted almost wholly to elementary science, and this is the only instruction in pure science which the majority of veterinary surgeons receive after leaving school. Professor Sheridan Delépine, the Director of the Public Health Laboratory of the University of Manchester, in which courses in Veterinary State Medicine for qualified veterinary surgeons have been conducted during the last eight years, stated that a large number of veterinary students have spent the first three months of that course, which lasts only six months, in making themselves familiar with elementary scientific methods (*Q.* 1557). This cannot be regarded as satisfactory, and it is highly desirable that veterinary officers who are to become responsible for the conduct of advanced research and investigatory work

(and, if possible, those who are to engage in administrative work also) should obtain a thorough grounding in general science before they commence the course for the veterinary diploma.

At present, for all practical purposes, no channel exists between the university and the veterinary college, and the evidence shows that few university graduates are to be found at the colleges. (Q. 242, 556-7, 716, 1249, 1611, 1640.) The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons prescribes a four years' course for every student without regard to any qualifications he may possess when he enters the veterinary college. The representatives of the veterinary colleges who attended before us were of opinion that, if the regulations permitted, it would be quite possible in the case of a student possessing a suitable science degree to reduce the course to three years by exempting him from attendance at classes in subjects which he had already taken for his degree. This would be a great improvement on the present position, and the statement made by Mr. Garnett, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, who attended before us as the representative of that College, that he himself would be agreeable to such exemption, suggests that there is good reason to consider that the Council of the College would give this proposal their favourable consideration (Q. 1167-72). Other members of the Council who appeared before us also expressed their personal concurrence in the suggestion. It was generally agreed that a student possessing a suitable degree would have a knowledge of the pure science subjects which form nearly the whole of the first year's course at a veterinary college far in excess of that required for the veterinary diploma, and we are of opinion that the question of recognising university courses of a shorter duration than that required for a degree as qualifying for exemption, is also worthy of the serious consideration of the Royal College.

16. We do not, however, think that this step, important though it be, will alone achieve the object we have in view. It would take at least six years for a university graduate to qualify as a veterinary surgeon counting from the time he enters the university, and most men will be deterred by the cost of so long and so expensive an education. So far as we are aware, there are no scholarships of any description available for men who desire to enter a veterinary college. But we are convinced that, from the point of view of the requirements of the State, men with a university training would prove of the greatest possible value, and that good men would avail themselves of inducements offered to enter the veterinary profession. We, therefore, recommend that the State should institute for a period of five years a certain number of scholarships tenable at approved veterinary colleges for three years and of sufficient value to attract men of sound scientific training. By the end of five years the scholars selected in the first year would have been qualified as veterinary surgeons for two years, and information would be available respecting them, so that it would be possible to form some estimate of the success of the scheme. It would not be advisable to make the offer of the scholarships for a shorter period than five years, as one of the objects we have in view is that some young men desiring to become veterinary surgeons, and knowing of the existence of these State scholarships, may be induced to go from the secondary school to the university instead of direct to a veterinary college.

In order to secure men of sufficiently high scientific training it will be necessary to restrict the scholarships to candidates who have obtained their degree in subjects cognate to their future work. We consider, however, that the possession of a degree would not be sufficient in itself, and that nomination would be necessary to ensure suitable personal qualifications; some witnesses have laid stress on the necessity of the men selected having a knowledge of and interest in country and animal life. The intention of the candidates as to their future careers would also have to be considered. The selection of scholars should be made by a Committee composed of representatives of the Government Departments concerned with such expert assistance as may be deemed necessary. The Committee might, if they thought desirable, institute a competitive examination, and all the scholarships would not be awarded unless a sufficient number of suitable men applied. The value of the scholarship should be sufficient to cover the cost of the fees and residence while attending a veterinary college. After careful consideration and having regard to present and future requirements we consider that 12 scholarships could profitably be offered each year, each scholarship to be of the annual value of 80*l.* and tenable for three years.

It would be extremely undesirable that anything in the nature of a promise of future employment in the public services should be made to the successful scholar. On

the other hand, we think that it might be advisable to issue with the forms of nomination a statement of the number of Government appointments requiring veterinary qualifications and the conditions of service, so that the student during his college course may endeavour to qualify himself for such posts.

17. In view of the fact that these scholarships would not be awarded for the benefit of any one branch of the public service, and that they would result in advantage to veterinary education generally, we are of opinion that any money that may be provided for this purpose should be administered by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, whose duty it would be to keep in close touch with the other Government Departments concerned and to ascertain their requirements. State recognition and the entry of a number of graduates into the veterinary colleges would no doubt have the effect of further increasing the estimation in which the veterinary profession is deservedly held.

COURSE OF STUDY AFTER QUALIFICATION.

18. It was generally agreed among the professional witnesses that the course for the qualifying diploma was not of itself sufficient training for future officers in the Government services. It was also agreed that the courses at present provided for men after they have qualified, while of great value so far as they go, are not sufficient. These courses last for about two months only, and the evidence of most witnesses led to the conclusion that students in order to fit themselves to undertake official work at home and in the colonies could with great advantage spend a year in post-graduate work and study. The heads of the teaching institutions were practically unanimous in stating that many students who have shown the ability and the desire to continue their education after obtaining their diploma would be prevented from taking such a course owing to lack of means; their parents have, in many cases, made a considerable sacrifice to enable them to enter the profession and they naturally expect their sons to begin to earn their own living immediately after they qualify. With the exception of the recently instituted Research Scholarships in Agricultural Science, of which not more than one, or occasionally two, a year can reasonably be expected to be awarded for animal pathology, there are no scholarships available for the benefit of students such as we have mentioned. All the members of the profession questioned on the subject testified that the institution of a number of scholarships available for men who have qualified would be attended with great benefit.

19. For the reasons above stated it is, in our opinion, essential that the State should provide scholarships for men who have already qualified, to enable them to continue their studies with a view to enter the public services. Each scholarship should be tenable for at least twelve months at an approved institution, or institutions, either at home or abroad, where special facilities for such studies exist. It is essential that opportunity should be given for advanced study to be carried on in the laboratories of universities and other institutions which afford adequate opportunities for study and research of the kind required, and the choice should not necessarily be confined to institutions in the United Kingdom. (*Q.* 285, 628, 979, 1077-80, 1115, 1176-8, 1414-21, 1531-2, 1600-4, 1657-65.)

The method of awarding these scholarships should, in our opinion, be as follows:—Candidates should be nominated by the Principals of the Veterinary Colleges as showing promise of marked capacity for advanced study or research; the candidates themselves should be asked, among other questions, to state (1) what special branch of study they desired to pursue, (2) what institutions they would wish to work at, and (3) what occupation they proposed to take up at the end of the period for which the scholarship, if awarded, would be tenable. The applications would be considered by a Selection Committee comprising representatives of the Government Departments concerned, with such expert assistance as might be required. The most likely candidates would be interviewed, and arrangements made for obtaining from their nominators or referees any additional information required. To prevent any misconception, it may be desirable to state that in our opinion these advanced scholarships should be open to any qualified veterinary surgeon. Men who had held one of the scholarships the institution of which we recommend earlier in this report would naturally be eligible for nomination. It would probably be desirable that the number of these scholarships offered should vary from time to time, and the number to be awarded each year should be settled by the Selection Committee, having regard to the supply of suitable candidates and the vacancies likely to occur.

The amount of the scholarships remains to be considered. We think that the best course would be that the Selection Committee, when recommending the award of a scholarship, should state at what institution or institutions it should be tenable, and what sum would be required to cover the cost of fees and maintenance. We think, however, that the annual value of a scholarship should not be less than 100*l.* and should not exceed 150*l.*

20. We have considered the question whether the successful candidates for these scholarships should be required, before the award of the scholarship, to enter into a contract to join at the termination of the year the branch of the public service for which his year's course of study has been designed specially to fit him. We are of opinion that, as a rule, such a contract should not be required. The selection for Government appointments should not be restricted to men who hold or have held scholarships. It would be unwise, as well as unfair, to exclude from competition those who, without such aid, may have acquired the requisite qualifications. Further, it may be advisable that in the case of certain appointments requiring qualifications of an exceptional kind—*e.g.*, in relation to tropical diseases—selection should precede special training, in order that the training may be directed into the particular course desired. In such cases it may be left to the Department concerned to decide the course of studies and to provide such financial assistance as is considered necessary.

NOTIFICATION OF VACANCIES.

21. In view of the comparatively small number of vacancies which occur annually, we have considered whether any substantial improvement could be effected by the adoption of a system by which the veterinary appointments in the different Government services could be "pooled." We have come to the conclusion that the requirements of the Departments vary so considerably that little advantage would be derived from such a system and that it would be exceedingly difficult to work. We are, however, of opinion that improvements could be made in the existing arrangements for notifying vacancies as they occur. No doubt this subject in its broad aspect is receiving the attention of the Royal Commission on the Civil Service which is now sitting. From the evidence we have received, it appears that students at the Veterinary Colleges have an opportunity of obtaining information regarding the various public and Government appointments which exist, but we think that further steps should be taken to inform the authorities of the colleges and of universities of any vacancies when they occur. The Government Departments, as a rule, keep lists of the names of the most promising men who have applied for an appointment, but we think that suitable candidates who would not, perhaps, apply to have their names added to these lists, would be glad to enter for a definite vacancy to which their attention had been called. We, therefore, recommend that, whenever such a course can possibly be adopted, particulars of Government veterinary appointments as they become vacant should be sent by the Department concerned to the heads of each of the veterinary colleges and also to universities and other institutions, with information as to the latest date on which applications will be received, and a statement that the vacancy will not be filled before that date. It is desirable that the nature of these appointments should be more generally known as an interesting and important branch of the State service.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS.

22. In the course of our inquiry we have had to consider a number of questions which affect, not only the public veterinary services, but the veterinary profession and veterinary education generally. Many of these do not come within the scope of our inquiry, but there are one or two points which it seems to us important to notice.

23. The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons was constituted by Royal Charter in 1844, and its powers therein defined have been confirmed and extended by Supplementary Charters and by Acts of Parliament. The body corporate is constituted of the members of the College, all of whom must have passed the required examinations. It is not only the representative, but the disciplinary and diploma-granting body of the profession. In 1895 the College decided to extend the course of study for the diploma of membership from three to four years. There seems to be no ground for doubt that the standard of veterinary education was considerably raised by this action, but the number of candidates entering for the yearly examinations fell immediately the change came into operation and has not since risen. The

effect on the finances of the College, so we were informed, has been disastrous (Q. 1200). The reduction in the receipts from examination fees was the more felt by reason of the fact that the cost of conducting the examinations was increased in 1902 owing to the recognition of two additional veterinary colleges. Under the Acts and Charters the College must conduct examinations annually in England, Scotland, and Ireland, and, as a matter of fact, it holds examinations twice each year at each of the five affiliated centres. The lack of funds seriously hampers the work of the College. With a view to improve its financial position the College is seeking power in a Bill now before Parliament to charge an annual fee of one guinea on each of its members and fellows. This Bill, we understand, has the support of the great majority of the profession, but so far little progress has been made with its consideration. We are of opinion that the College is performing work of great national importance, and that its efforts to maintain a high standard of veterinary education in this country are worthy of every encouragement.

24. The majority of the veterinary colleges are entirely self-contained so far as their teaching staff is concerned, that is, they not only provide the staff for the specific veterinary subjects, but they also employ teachers for the preliminary science subjects which have to be studied in the first year. On the other hand, the veterinary school at Liverpool utilises the services of the general university staff for practically all the subjects taken in the first year. We think that it would probably be desirable on educational grounds that similar arrangements should be adopted at the other centres, and that the general scientific subjects studied during the first year should be taken at a university or college where such instruction could be afforded. Similar arrangements exist in some universities in connection with the Degree and Diploma Courses in Agriculture and appear to work satisfactorily. The Government grants at present paid to the veterinary colleges are very small, and these colleges are probably more dependent on receipts from students' fees than any other class of educational institution of the same grade. We think that the time has come when increased financial assistance should be given by the Government to institutions devoted to veterinary teaching, the efficiency of which is of great importance to the State.

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

25. In the course of our inquiry we have arrived at the following conclusions:—

- (a) That the requirements of the Army Veterinary Service are adequately met at the present time. (Section 4.)
- (b) That the number of suitable candidates for appointments in the other public veterinary services is inadequate. (Sections 8-14.)
- (c) That a largely increased number of veterinary officers possessing special qualifications will be required for the public services. (Section 11.)

26. With a view to increase the number of highly-qualified veterinary surgeons available for employment in the public services, we recommend that—

- (a) Students possessing a suitable science degree should be granted exemption from one of the four years at present required for veterinary qualification, and that the requisite adjustment should be made in the course at the veterinary colleges. (Section 15.)
- (b) Twelve scholarships should be offered each year of the annual value of 80*l.*, each tenable at a veterinary college for three years, with a view to encourage a number of men who have received a good scientific education to enter the veterinary profession. (Section 16.)
- (c) Scholarships of an annual value of not less than 100*l.* and not exceeding 150*l.* should be offered each year to enable qualified veterinary surgeons to undertake advanced study and laboratory work at suitable institutions. (Section 19.)
- (d) The method of notifying vacancies in the public veterinary services should be improved as above suggested. (Section 21.)
- (e) Increased State aid should be given to institutions devoted to veterinary education. (Section 24.)

We believe that the adoption of these recommendations would lead to the more general recognition of the veterinary services concerned as constituting an essential part of the Government administration.

In conclusion, we desire to express our appreciation of the assistance rendered to us by our Secretary, Mr. H. L. French, both in the preparation of this Report and throughout the inquiry. He has discharged the various duties entrusted to him with tact, assiduity, and ability, and we are much indebted to him for his services.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

(Signed) ALFRED HOPKINSON (*Chairman*).

T. H. ELLIOTT.

H. J. READ.

G. F. MACMUNN.

FRANCIS C. DRAKE.

H. L. FRENCH (*Secretary*).

7th January 1913.



